

# East and Southern Africa

## 22 countries

Angola	2
Botswana	
Burundi	3
Comoros*	1
Eritrea	2
Eswatini	2
Ethiopia*	4
Kenya*	4
Lesotho*	2
Madagascar*	4
Malawi*	4
Mauritius	
Mozambique	3
Namibia	
Rwanda	3
Seychelles	
South Africa	
South Sudan	2
Uganda*	3
United Republic of Tanzania	1
Zambia	1
Zimbabwe	2

Numbers indicate ongoing projects and programmes

\* Countries with ongoing ASAP grants

**US\$2,044.9 million**

invested by IFAD in the region's ongoing portfolio

**US\$178.1 million**

in IFAD financing approved in 2023

**43 ongoing programmes and projects**

in partnership with 17 countries in the region at the end of 2023

**6 new programmes and projects**

approved in 2023 in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania. Additional financing provided for ongoing projects in Burundi and Mozambique

**3 new country strategic opportunities programmes**

for Ethiopia, Mozambique and South Sudan

# Highlighted project

# Rwanda

The Rwanda Dairy Development Project has invested in milk collection and processing infrastructure, in addition to climate-proofing existing infrastructure. It has increased the number of rainwater harvesting facilities and provided training in production and marketing techniques through [livestock farmer field schools](#).

**More than 150,000 rural households have benefited (more than double the initial target)**

**Participants' income has increased by an average of 19 per cent**

**74 per cent of participating women have reached minimum dietary diversity**

**58 milk collection centres have been rehabilitated and 50 milk collection points have been constructed**

## Burundi

Much of the 400 litres of milk collected daily at the milk collection centre in Mwurire hill is transported to Bujumbura to be sold at urban markets.

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The region of East and Southern Africa has made remarkable progress in advancing the SDGs, with investments totalling around US\$2 billion in key mainstreaming themes, which play a pivotal role in propelling progress across several critical dimensions in the region, contributing substantively to sustainable development. Our [Crisis Response Initiative](#), focusing on seven countries in this region, has played a vital role in this expansion, supporting local food systems in building their resilience to the impacts of the war in Ukraine. IFAD-supported projects in the region are especially pivotal to advancing SDGs 1 (no poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 5 (gender equality) and 8 (decent employment).

Dedicated climate finance initiatives that prioritize sustainable agricultural practices and resilient infrastructure have resulted in measurable improvements, significantly reducing climate vulnerabilities and mitigating risks in agriculture, marking a noteworthy advance towards enhanced climate resilience. Nutrition-sensitive programmes have delivered impactful results, showcasing a marked decrease in malnutrition rates and fostering improved access to diverse and nutritious food sources for a substantial rural population.

At the same time, efforts to boost youth employment have created meaningful opportunities for integrating the increasing youth demographic into the regional economy. Targeted interventions have supported women in agriculture, enhancing their representation in leadership roles within agricultural cooperatives.

## Transforming small farms into profitable businesses

IFAD's work is focused on transforming small-scale farmers into market-oriented entrepreneurs. Providing training in improved production techniques, increasing access to high-quality inputs and linking producer organizations to markets have all been crucial for success. For example, the [Rwanda Dairy Development Project](#) provides small-scale livestock farmers with high-quality grass seed, sustainable water management techniques and training on improving productivity and market integration. Milk production has risen by more than 50 per cent, and farmers are now getting their produce to markets, leading to an almost 20 per cent improvement in incomes.

**“My cows now generate 50 litres every day,” Livingstone Abingoma says. “I managed to buy an AG 100 motorcycle and a double cabin car to ease transport of milk at the milk collection centre.”**

Strengthening the skills of small-scale farmers and their organizations so that they can benefit from commercial agriculture is central to IFAD's work across the region. In Malawi, the [Transforming Agriculture through Diversification and Entrepreneurship Programme](#) is working with farmer organizations in different subsectors – including dairy, beef and honey – and linking them with markets, while also providing them with training in areas such as cooperative management and climate-smart agriculture.

## Prioritizing bottom-up approaches

The best solutions are those grounded in the local community: those designed and implemented in partnership with local people. In Ethiopia's Oromia region, the [Lowlands Livelihood Resilience Project](#) is giving communities a menu of public goods to choose from based on their needs and available resources. With funds provided by the project, local people set up a cattle-fattening group, which has grown into a thriving business.

**“In this project, we participated in identifying what it should do for us,” said Hawa Uso. “We participated in all activities and even shared the costs. This project is ours: we look after it, protect it and make good use of it.”**

Strengthening livestock assets has been another important strategy to support people across East and Southern Africa in dealing with the multiple crises they have faced in recent years. Receiving livestock through IFAD's Rural Poor Stimulus Facility has strengthened rural people's resilience during difficult times and given them hope for the future. In Zambia, providing chicken and rabbits to families enabled them to feed themselves during the pandemic, sell surpluses and improve their resilience.

## Spotlight on Mozambique

Despite various recent challenges – including seven cyclones in four years and the emergence of conflict in northern Mozambique – IFAD's Mozambique country portfolio has shown a significant impact on poverty and hunger.

Our current investment in Mozambique amounts to US\$147 million across three ongoing projects. In addition, in May 2023, we provided a grant under the Crisis Response Initiative to strengthen the resilience of rural communities to the impact of the war in Ukraine on food systems. We are also working with a local bank to provide a facility specifically tailored towards providing finance for small-scale farmers and other rural businesses.

Improving access to financial services is one of the cornerstones of our Mozambique country programme. According to a 2023 review of the country programme, between 2018 and 2022 we helped support or strengthen over 3,000 credit associations, encompassing a total of around 25,000 members. These groups now make extensive use of information and communications technology and mobile money platforms for secure transactions, which has helped many users connect to the formal financial sector. Overall, thanks to ongoing projects, more than 88,000 rural people have been able to access financial services.

Another focus of the Mozambique country programme has been on incorporating nutrition-sensitive approaches into projects, particularly prioritizing dietary diversity. Improving nutrition is now a core element in all new projects, with nutrition interventions embedded throughout the project cycle. Final assessments have shown the impact of these approaches. For example, the Rural Markets Promotion Programme has achieved its targets with regard to minimum dietary diversity for different target groups, reaching over two thirds for adolescents and infants in participating families. Overall, over 47,000 rural people participating in IFAD projects across the country have benefited from improved nutrition.

IFAD's work, along with our partners, has contributed to an overall decline in Mozambique's chronic malnutrition rate to below 40 per cent.

In total, between 2018 and 2022, the IFAD Mozambique country programme touched the lives of almost 900,000 people, surpassing the original target by almost 100,000. More than half of these people are women. Over the past two decades, IFAD's work, along with that of our partners, has contributed to reducing the share of people in need of food and nutrition assistance by half, bringing it down from 61 per cent to 24 per cent.



**“Even if we get a poor harvest in the field, we can sell the rabbits and we can have a meal at home,” explained Violet Banda, a rabbit farmer who participated in Rural Poor Stimulus Facility activities in Zambia.**